

## Exposure Hierarchy for Social Anxiety

Exposure therapy for social anxiety works by gradually confronting feared social situations. This repeated exposure helps to reduce anxiety over time through a process called habituation, where the brain learns that the situation is not actually dangerous. As anxiety decreases, individuals gain confidence and build coping skills to manage social situations more effectively.

### Instructions:

- 1. Identify situations that make you feel less confident:** List specific social situations that bring up feelings of anxiety or discomfort.
- 2. Rate your comfort level:** Assign a number to each situation from 0 (completely comfortable) to 100 (extremely uncomfortable). This helps us understand how challenging each situation feels to you right now.
- 3. Create a step-by-step plan:** Arrange the situations starting with the easiest and gradually working up to the most challenging. This allows you to build confidence step by step.
- 4. Start with the easiest step:** Begin by practicing the situation that feels most comfortable to you.
- 5. Gradually build your confidence:** Once you feel more comfortable with a situation, move on to the next one in the plan.
- 6. Practice regularly:** Consistent practice is key to building lasting social confidence and reducing anxiety.

### Example Exposure Hierarchy:

Situation	Comfort Level (0-100)	Notes
1. Saying hello to a cashier at the store.	30	
2. Making brief eye contact with a stranger.	40	
3. Asking a store employee for help finding something.	50	
4. Giving a compliment to someone you know.	60	
5. Making small talk with a classmate or coworker.	65	
6. Joining a conversation with a small group of people.	70	
7. Eating lunch in a public space alone.	75	
8. Speaking up in a small meeting or class.	80	
9. Going to a social event where you only know a few people.	85	
10. Giving a presentation to a group.	90	

## Exposure Hierarchy for Social Anxiety cont.

### Working Together:

- **We're a team:** I'm here to support you every step of the way. We'll work together to tailor this plan for your specific needs.
- **Your feedback matters:** Let me know what's working and what's not. We can adjust the plan as needed to fit your needs and preferences.
- **Practice makes progress:** Remember that building confidence takes practice. Don't be afraid to try new things and step outside your comfort zone.
- **Celebrate your successes:** Acknowledge and celebrate every step forward, no matter how small.

Situation	Comfort Level (0-100)	Notes
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		